



Northeast and Caribbean Region

# Small Business News

Autumn 2005, Issue V

brought to you by

**The U.S. General Services Administration  
Northeast and Caribbean Region  
Small Business Utilization Center (SBUC)**



## Monthly Schedules Workshops

In order to provide small business owners with the best possible assistance, the GSA Small Business Utilization Center (SBUC) is currently revamping its training. Starting in October 2005, workshops on "How to obtain a GSA Federal Supply Schedule Contract" will be conducted on the second Wednesday of every month. These workshops will explain how to access government solicitations, the most significant sections of an offer, how to submit an offer, and the evaluation and award process. A more in-depth and comprehensible review of the process of getting on Schedule will be provided. In addition, smaller class sizes will permit additional time for questions and one-on-one counseling.

These workshops are offered to the small business community at no charge. Seating is limited and is on a first-come first-served basis. The workshops will be conducted by an associate from the U.S. General Services Administration.

Upcoming Schedules workshops for the next fiscal year: \*

2005:

- October 12, November 9, December 14

2006:

- January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12, May 10, June 14, July 12, August 9, September 13

\* **Dates subject to change. Please contact the SBUC.**

Details on the October 2005 session are as follows:

**Wednesday, October 12, 2005**

9am- 1pm (Please arrive at 8:30am to sign in)

26 Federal Plaza (Duane Street Entrance) New York City

Room 3037A (30th Floor)

Photo ID Required

Free admission! Seating is limited so register soon!

**Please register at the following website:**

[http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?eventId=4251&contentType=GSA\\_EVENTS&byEventId=y](http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?eventId=4251&contentType=GSA_EVENTS&byEventId=y)

(Or visit [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov), select Region 2 under "Find a GSA Organization or Region. Then access the workshop under "Events" to register on-line.)

Please be sure to review the Frequently Asked Questions document on the above website to ensure that this event is appropriate and will be beneficial for you.

**For additional information on upcoming workshops and events, please contact the GSA SBUC at [R2.SBUC@gsa.gov](mailto:R2.SBUC@gsa.gov) or 212-264-8265.**



## Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses Benefit from New Laws

Did you know that the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999 (PL 106-50) established the governmentwide goal for participation by service-disabled veteran owned small businesses (SDVOSBs) at 3% of the total value of prime contract awards for each fiscal year?

Public Law 108-183 (also known as the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Benefits Improvement Act of 2003) now allows for sole-source contracts and contract set-asides for SDVOSBs. This law was given added impetus by President Bush in October 2004 when he issued Executive Order (EO) 13360, which provides opportunities for SDVOSBs to increase their federal contracting and subcontracting relationships with federal civilian agencies and the Department of Defense.

In light of these new laws and the fact that GSA Schedules remain the fastest-growing contract vehicle used by government agencies to contract with SDVOSBs, Schedule contractors who are service-disabled veterans (and who own at least 51% of their company), should ensure that their contracting officers are aware of their SDVOSB socio-economic status.

For a wealth of information on SDVOSB procurement opportunities, visit [www.gsa.gov/service-disabled](http://www.gsa.gov/service-disabled). Schedule holders who are majority-owned by service-disabled veterans should go to [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov), which is the Central Contractor Registration site to update and self-certify their SDVOSB status. Schedule holders with SDVOSB status can also go to [www.eps.gov/servlet/VendorReg](http://www.eps.gov/servlet/VendorReg) (at the FedBizOpps website- [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)) and sign up to receive Acquisition Notifications for the classification and NAICS Codes that they are interested in.

Other useful sites for SDVOSB Schedule contractors include:

[www.vetbiz.gov](http://www.vetbiz.gov)

[www.sba.gov/vets](http://www.sba.gov/vets)

[www.va.gov/osdbu](http://www.va.gov/osdbu)

[www.dla.mil](http://www.dla.mil)

[www.vetfriends.com](http://www.vetfriends.com)

For marketing assistance and information on national and regional events which promote SDVOSB procurement opportunities, please contact Jim Nicols, GSA's Federal Supply Service (FSS) Regional Veterans Business Coordinator for Region 2's Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Initiative, at [james.nicols@gsa.gov](mailto:james.nicols@gsa.gov).



## U.S. Small Business Administration Certifications

The GSA SBUC recently spoke with Ms. Georgia Ellis, Assistant District Director, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Business Development Programs, about the various small business certifications that currently exist in the SBA. She offered the following information to small businesses:

The U. S. Small Business Administration has three certification programs. The first one is the 8(a) Business Development Program for small entrepreneurs that are socially and economically disadvantaged. The purpose is to assist entrepreneurs in gaining a foothold in government contracting. Participation is divided into two phases over nine years: a four year developmental stage and a five-year transition stage. Participants can receive sole source contracts, up to a ceiling of \$3 million for goods and services and \$5 million for manufacturing. While SBA helps 8(a) participants to build their competitive and institutional know-how, the agency also encourages the participants to bid on competitive acquisitions, <http://www.sba.gov/8abd>.

The second certification program is the Small Disadvantaged Business, SDB. The SBA certifies SDBs to make them eligible for special bidding benefits. Evaluation credits are available to prime contractors to boost subcontracting opportunities for SDB entrepreneurs. While the 8(a) Business Development Program offers a broad scope of assistance to socially and economically disadvantage firms, the SDB certification strictly pertains to benefits in federal

procurement. 8(a) entrepreneurs automatically qualify as a SDB, <http://www.sba.gov/sdb>.

The third certification is the new HUBZone Empowerment Contracting Program. This certification program allows small firms located in many urban or rural areas to qualify for various types of federal contract benefits. The term HUBZone stands for "historically underutilized business zone". 8(a) and SDBs located in HUBZone areas are eligible for benefits under this program as long as they have become certified under the HUBZone program as well <http://www.sba.gov/HUBZone>.

SBA certifies small businesses that meet specific social, economic, ownership, and control eligibility criteria. It is the task of the SBA to teach small businesses how to compete in the federal contracting arena and how to take advantage of greater prime and subcontracting opportunities available from the federal government and from large corporations doing business with the federal government.

These certifications attempt to create an environment where small businesses can gain procurement experience through limited competition. The small business community can go to the individual websites to learn about how to become certified under each program. In addition, the SBA New York District Office conducts certification training on a monthly basis.

Additional information can be obtained by calling 212-264-4322, Business Development Division, New York District Office or visiting SBA's calendar of events at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** My company provides construction services. How do I get on the bidder's list/ how do I obtain a GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract?

**A.** Not all services are included in the GSA Federal Supply Schedules. For example, architecture & engineering, general construction, janitorial and some other building services are not on the GSA Federal Supply Schedule.

Instead, you can visit FedBizOpps ([www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)), which is the single government point-of-entry (GPE) for Federal government procurement opportunities over \$25,000. Government buyers are able to publicize their business opportunities by posting information directly to FedBizOpps via the Internet. Through one portal - FedBizOpps (FBO) - commercial vendors seeking Federal markets for their products and services can search, monitor and retrieve opportunities solicited by the entire Federal contracting community. You can register to receive solicitations under the vendor notification service.

Q. What is the difference between a schedule and a solicitation?

A. A GSA Federal Supply schedule is an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract for products and/or services at stated prices for a five-year time period with options to renew, in most cases, for up to twenty years. It is a listing of negotiated contracts where awards are made to multiple firms for a variety of products/services. Customer agencies order from, and pay contractors directly.

A solicitation is synonymous with offer or bid package. It is your invitation to submit an offer to provide supplies and/or services to Federal agencies through the GSA Federal Supply Schedule program.

Q. What is CCR and is this something I should look into?

A. The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the primary vendor database for the U.S. Federal Government. The CCR collects, validates, stores and disseminates data in support of agency acquisition missions. Both current and potential government vendors are required to register in CCR in order to be awarded contracts by the government. Vendors are required to complete a one-time registration to provide basic information relevant to procurement and financial transactions.

For additional information and to register, please visit <http://www.ccr.gov>

Q. I already have a GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract. How can I obtain marketing assistance?

**A.** Please contact the GSA SBUC at [R2.SBUC@gsa.gov](mailto:R2.SBUC@gsa.gov) or 212-264-1234 to obtain a list of Federal Supply Schedule marketing strategies. Also, you can contact Judy Poskanzer, Director of Marketing and Customer Service, at (212) 264-0305 or [judy.poskanzer@gsa.gov](mailto:judy.poskanzer@gsa.gov)

**Q.** I am unable to attend one of your workshops in person. Is there any online training that I can take to learn how to obtain a GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract?

**A.** Yes, the FAS Center for Acquisition Excellence Virtual Campus offers online Schedules training. The following course is currently offered: "How to Become a Contractor-GSA Schedules Program". Please visit the following website: <https://fsstraining.gsa.gov>

Also, please be sure to contact the SBUC if you would like to receive information, handouts from a workshop, or if you need assistance or have any questions. We can be reached at [R2.SBUC@gsa.gov](mailto:R2.SBUC@gsa.gov) or 212-264-1234.



## Grants.gov

The U.S. General Services Administration does not provide grants to entrepreneurs and/or small businesses. To obtain information on grants, please visit [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

Grants.gov allows organizations to electronically find and apply for competitive grant opportunities from all Federal grant-making agencies. Grants.gov is THE single access point for over 1000 grant programs offered by the 26 Federal grant-making agencies. The US Department of Health and Human Services is the managing partner for Grants.gov.





## Federal Surplus Sales Program & Utilization and Donation Program

Federal surplus property, including supplies, equipment and vehicles can be accessed online via GSA Auctions® ([www.gsaauctions.gov](http://www.gsaauctions.gov)), which is available twenty four hours a day, seven days per week. This user-friendly website enables for the search and bid of property based on product category or location.

The Utilization and Donation Program in GSA's Federal Acquisition Service, in the Northeast & Caribbean Region, works closely with the Computers for Learning Program. In this program, GSA donates computers to many different schools. In recent months, the General Services Administration, under the Donation Program has donated over (75) complete computer systems, to the NY school system. Along with these computers, several printers, laptops, Xerox machines and facsimile machines were also donated to those in need.

The agencies/schools that have received donated equipment are listed below:

- The Negro Ensemble
- Automotive High School - Brooklyn, NY
- PS 25 - Staten Island, NY
- Trinity- Chelten Enrichment Center- a Women's group - (Welfare to work)  
They also were provided with old cell phones.
- Saint Finbar - Brooklyn, NY
- Bnos Zion of Bobov school - a yeshiva (Jewish school)

For additional information on the Federal Surplus Sales Program, please contact John Breen at (215) 446-5070.

For additional information on the Utilization and Donation Program, please contact the GSA Disposal Specialists, Michelle Downes, Philip Heitner or Catherine Morant at 212-264-2626 or 212-264-4822.





## Long Island Development Corporation PTAC

The GSA SBUC recently interviewed Ms. Patricia Cook, Government Procurement Specialist, of the Long Island Development Corporation Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC).

**GSA SBUC:** Can you explain the services that the Long Island Development Corporation PTAC provides to small businesses?

**Patricia Cook:** LIDC's Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) provides assistance to small businesses in Nassau and Suffolk counties in all phases of contracting with government entities and the private sector. We offer our services free of charge and assist companies from the onset of a request for quotation to the successful completion of the contract. These services include bid searching, proposal preparation, negotiation, interpretation and clarification of specifications and regulations, finding the correct points of contact, marketing, registration in the CCR, providing codes, financial guidance, assisting in certifications for Woman, HUBZones, Veterans and Disadvantaged companies. Free seminars, workshops and one-on-one counseling are provided. PTAP has assisted small businesses on Long Island to receive over \$1 billion worth of government contracts.

**GSA SBUC:** How can a small business best take advantage of all the services that you have to offer?

**Patricia Cook:** A small business can take advantage of our services by attending the workshops offered at the Long Island Development Corp's Center for Knowledge in Bethpage and "Doing Business with the Government" seminars in various locations. One-on-one counseling is offered by our highly educated and experienced staff, in an effort to help the companies to find and perform on Government contracts. All workshops, seminars and counseling are free of charge.

**GSA SBUC:** Please tell us a little bit more about your training workshops.

**Patricia Cook:** Training workshops consist of small groups learning a concentrated subject. We just completed a series called "Government for Beginners" which emphasized the basics of dealing with government contracts such as: acronyms, definition of terms found in government contracts, certifications and representations, how to read and respond to a government contract or quotation, etc.

**GSA SBUC:** Thank you very much for your time and the valuable information that you provided to our small business readers.

For additional information or assistance, please contact the Long Island Development Corporation PTAC at 516-433-5000 or visit <http://www.lidc.org/>

For a complete list of PTACs, please visit [www.sellingtothegovernment.net](http://www.sellingtothegovernment.net)



## Websites for Small Businesses

- GSA's Homepage: <http://www.gsa.gov>
- GSA Office of Small Business Utilization: [www.gsa.gov/smallbusiness](http://www.gsa.gov/smallbusiness)
- GSA Schedules: [www.fss.gsa.gov/schedules](http://www.fss.gsa.gov/schedules)
- Schedules e-Library: [www.gsa.gov/elibrary](http://www.gsa.gov/elibrary)
- Central Contractor Registration (CCR): <http://www.ccr.gov>
- Federal Business Opportunities: <http://www.fbo.gov>
- SBA Program Certifications: [www.sba.gov/certifications](http://www.sba.gov/certifications)
- Loans: [http://www.sba.gov/starting\\_business/](http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/)
- Grants: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)
- Federal Acquisition Regulations: [www.arnet.gov/far](http://www.arnet.gov/far)



**Any questions?** Please contact the GSA SBUC by email at [R2.SBUC@gsa.gov](mailto:R2.SBUC@gsa.gov) or by phone at 212-264-1234. We may include your question in one of our future newsletters.

**We are very interested** in hearing about your experiences with GSA and the extent to which you are satisfied with the services we provide. Please be sure to let us know if you are awarded a contract.



lease send comments and suggestions about our newsletter by email, fax or mail.

Is there something you would like to see in future issues?

We look forward to hearing from you!

Email: [R2.SBUC@gsa.gov](mailto:R2.SBUC@gsa.gov)

Fax: 212-264-2760 ATTN: SBUC

Mail: GSA Program Support & HR Division (2AR)  
Small Business Utilization Center  
26 Federal Plaza; Room 18-110  
New York, NY 10278



*If you would like to subscribe to our quarterly newsletter, please contact the GSA SBUC via email ([R2.SBUC@gsa.gov](mailto:R2.SBUC@gsa.gov)) or phone (212-264-1234.)*